

**MEDIA ADVISORY FOR PLANNING PURPOSES**

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL [00.00am GMT] 25<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020**

Southern African Development Community (SADC) nations have united in calls for an end to international sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe.

These are the latest calls, in a growing campaign among African nations to free Zimbabwe of the sanctions from the United States and Europe. It comes as Zimbabwe holds its second annual 'Anti-Sanctions Day'.

Sanctions have been imposed on Zimbabwe for almost two decades. When President Emmerson Mnangagwa won the election in 2018, he pledged to bring about reform, to forge a new relationship with the citizens of Zimbabwe and with the nations of the world.

Significant progress has been made. Most recently, the Zimbabwean Government announced it had achieved closure on the long-outstanding issue of compensation to farmers whose land was acquired during the Land Reform Programme of the late 90's and early 00's. The sum of US\$ 3,5 billion, for improvements effected to the land prior to its acquisition, was agreed-upon by way of negotiations between government and the farmers.

Elsewhere, the reformed Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission has received global plaudits, with some notable and important arrests, including two sitting cabinet ministers. The "audit of the rich", currently being undertaken, is expected to yield further fruits of transparency and accountability.

The progress has been welcomed by other African nations who spoke in support of Zimbabwe at the recent United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

South African President and African Union chair Cyril Ramaphosa said in his main address at the UNGA:

"To ensure that no country is left behind, we reiterate our position as the African Union that economic sanctions against Zimbabwe and Sudan should be lifted to allow their governments to respond adequately to the pandemic."

To mark Anti-Sanctions Day Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa said:

"I am proud of the progress we have made and continue to pursue.

"We want Zimbabwe to be more open, to grow our economy, to strengthen our public services, to improve the lives of our citizens and we want to play a positive part in the globalised world.

"Today is an opportunity for us to highlight our progress and demonstrate our determination to continue our new journey to our international partners. We want the world to see the removal of sanctions on Zimbabwe not as an act of charity, but as opportunity to build on the progress and reforms that we have already made.

"The sanctions on Zimbabwe are a breach of international law and compromise our capacity to implement and achieve sustainable development and, as the UN has acknowledged, sanctions have deleterious effects on our people."

**ENDS**

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